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First report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire

I. Introduction

1. By its resolution 1479 (2003) of 13 May 2003, the Security Council established the United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (MINUCI), for an initial period of six months, with a mandate to facilitate the implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement (S/2003/99, annex I). The Council also requested me to submit a report every three months on the implementation of that resolution. The present report was prepared pursuant to that request. It provides an assessment of the security and humanitarian situation in Côte d'Ivoire, as well as the steps taken by the Government of National Reconciliation towards implementing the Marcoussis Agreement. The report also describes the progress made in deploying the initial group of 26 United Nations military liaison officers to Côte d'Ivoire and the Mission's plan for the progressive deployment of the remaining 50 military liaison officers, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1479 (2003).

II. Security situation

2. The security situation in Côte d'Ivoire has continued to improve since the submission of my report of 26 March 2003 (S/2003/374 and Corr.1). In order to consolidate the ceasefire agreement of 17 October 2002, the Forces armées nationales de Côte d'Ivoire (FANCI) and the Forces nouvelles, comprising the Mouvement patriotique de Côte d'Ivoire (MPCI), the Mouvement populaire ivoirien du grand ouest (MPIGO) and the Mouvement pour la justice et la paix (MJP), signed a new comprehensive ceasefire agreement on 3 May. Under the terms of that agreement, the French Licorne forces and the forces of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) deployed to the western region of Côte d'Ivoire jointly with FANCI and the Forces nouvelles on 24 May, to create a weapons-free zone of confidence, extend the ceasefire line to the border between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, and disarm or expel armed Liberian elements from that area. As a result of that deployment, the security situation in the inaccessible western region of the country has significantly improved, resulting in the return of displaced villagers and the resumption of humanitarian activities.

3. Within the framework of the comprehensive ceasefire agreement, FANCI and the Forces nouvelles have established a mechanism for conducting a dialogue on

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security issues, through which they have reached agreement on specific cantonment areas for their respective troops. That dialogue and the disengagement of their forces have helped in building confidence between the two sides and in lessening tensions along the ceasefire line. The two sides, together with the Licorne and ECOWAS forces, have set up a joint operations headquarters in Bouaké and Bangolo, to facilitate coordination among the quadripartite forces.

4. Another significant development was the declaration issued on 4 July by FANCI and the Forces nouvelles formally proclaiming the end of the war in Côte d'Ivoire. Both sides pledged their loyalty to the President and undertook to resolve all future disputes through peaceful dialogue.

5. There remain, however, negative trends which threaten to reverse the important gains achieved on the security front. The initial improvement in the security situation in Abidjan, which had justified the downgrading of the security alert for the capital from phase 4 to phase 3, is now marred by the activities of armed militia groups who are opposed to the Marcoussis Agreement. In particular, the activities of the militias of the Groupement patriotique pour la paix based in the Marcory and Yopougon districts of Abidjan, and the so-called "young patriots", have created serious security and human rights challenges in the capital. The related activities of some prominent political figures, who have been calling for a campaign of civil disobedience against Cabinet Ministers affiliated with the Forces nouvelles, have also created tensions in the country.

6. Uncontrolled elements of the Forces nouvelles, who maintain checkpoints along major roads in the northern part of the country, as well as the "freelance" armed Liberian elements who still maintain a presence in the western region, constitute another major challenge to the fragile stability in the country. There are also confirmed reports about continuing rearmament by FANCI, as well as suspicions that the Forces nouvelles are rearming, which have given rise to allegations about ulterior motives. Those arms purchases undermine the confidence between the two sides and could erode the commitment of the Forces nouvelles to the disarmament of their forces.

7. The continued "partitioning" of the northern and southern parts of the country as a result of the control and administration of the northern region by the Forces nouvelles is also perpetuating a climate of uncertainty, which reinforces fears about possible renewed hostilities. Of particular concern in this regard are the measures reportedly taken by the Forces nouvelles to reorganize their forces into units corresponding to the gendarmerie, army and police forces of a State administration. The Forces nouvelles claim, however, that the restructuring was intended to ensure more effective control and facilitate payment of wages.

III. Implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement

8. The efforts of the Ivorian parties to move forward the implementation of the Marcoussis Agreement have yielded similarly mixed results. On the positive side, the Government of National Reconciliation has been installed and is now functioning under the leadership of the Prime Minister, Seydou Diarra. The Cabinet Ministers affiliated with the Forces nouvelles, who had boycotted the first three meetings of the Council of Ministers citing security concerns, eventually arrived in Abidjan to take up their posts in the new Government on 16 April. On 28 May, the

new Government presented its draft programme for the implementation of the Marcoussis Agreement, which is currently being considered by the National Assembly. The programme proposes mechanisms and ways of addressing the key issues identified in the Marcoussis Agreement, including citizenship, national identity and the status of foreign nationals; the electoral system; eligibility for election to the Presidency of the Republic; land tenure laws; the media; rights and freedoms of the individual; economic recovery and social cohesion; and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

9. The proposed programme envisages the setting up of mechanisms to work towards the development of effective proof of Ivorian nationality consistent with applicable laws. These mechanisms include a national commission on naturalization to review the existing naturalization laws, study comparable legislation on the identification process in ECOWAS countries and recommend residence permit requirements for ECOWAS nationals, as well as measures to improve the status of foreign nationals. The commission is expected to complete its work within nine months.

10. With respect to the electoral system, the Government intends to restructure the Independent Electoral Commission, introduce legislation to ensure credible voter identification, review the process of preparing the voters' register, address the question of funding for political parties, and take measures to guarantee the independence of the judiciary in adjudicating on electoral disputes. The process of reforming the electoral system is expected to be completed within a period of eight months. On the related issue of eligibility for election to the Presidency of the Republic, the Government, in keeping with the Marcoussis Agreement, would adopt measures over a period of five months to set the minimum age of candidates at 35 years and limit the tenure of office to two five-year terms. The candidates must be Ivorian citizens with either of their parents born Ivorians.

11. With respect to the rights and freedoms of the individual, the measures envisaged in the programme include the setting up of a National Human Rights Commission, and the establishment of an international commission to investigate cases of serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law that have occurred since the outbreak of the conflict in September 2002. Concerning the media, the programme foresees measures that would be instituted over a period of some 30 months, beyond the elections of 2005. They include legislation to ensure the freedom of the press and to strengthen the media regulatory bodies, as well as measures against abuses such as calumny, hatred and xenophobia, and steps to ensure the impartiality of State-owned media.

12. With regard to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, a team of experts from the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has been assisting the Government of National Reconciliation to design an effective programme. On 9 July, the Government announced a timetable for that programme, which foresaw the cantonment of forces commencing on 31 July and being completed by 15 August 2003. Disarmament would be conducted from 20 August to early September 2003, while demobilization would be completed by the end of September and reintegration by 20 October 2003. A programme for the voluntary disarmament of the civilian population would be implemented following the completion of the disarmament and demobilization of former combatants. Details of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

programme were presented to the Security Council when Prime Minister Seydou Diarra addressed the Council on 25 July. An office for the coordination of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme in the northern part of the country was opened in the MPCI stronghold of Bouaké on 11 July. The Licorne and ECOWAS forces, as well as the United Nations military liaison officers, FANCI and the Forces nouvelles, will jointly run the office. The commencement of the disarmament was delayed, however, because the Forces nouvelles linked it to the adoption of an amnesty law and the appointment of the Defence and Interior Ministers.

13. The amnesty law was eventually adopted by the National Assembly on 6 August. The law grants amnesty to persons who committed political acts against the security of the State from September 2000 to September 2002, and allows exiles to return. It does not however grant immunity for crimes against humanity and serious economic offences. The amnesty bill had generated active debate both within and outside the National Assembly. Many Ivorians contended that the bill was premature and stressed the need to verify violations of human rights and identify perpetrators of human rights abuses before raising the question of amnesty. Supporters of the initiative argued that the adoption of the law was vital to the creation of an enabling environment that would facilitate the implementation of the Marcoussis Agreement, and further build the climate of confidence that is required for the pursuit of national reconciliation. The next critical stage in the development of the programme for the implementation of the Marcoussis Agreement will be the submission to the National Assembly of some 41 draft decrees and bills covering the issues referred to above.

14. Other significant steps taken by the Government of National Reconciliation towards implementing the Marcoussis Agreement include the ongoing efforts to extend State authority throughout the country and restore public services in the northern and western parts of the country. To that end, on 22 May, the Prime Minister convened a Cabinet session in the MPCI stronghold of Bouaké. The Government has also dispatched technical assessment missions, comprising officials from banking institutions and utility companies, to the north, with a view to facilitating the restoration of economic and social services. In the same vein, a train has provided a trial rail service to the north to pave the way for the reopening of the railway line to that area. Concurrent with the measures to reopen the rebel-controlled north, the Government has also initiated efforts to repair relations and restore trade links with the neighbouring countries Burkina Faso and Mali, which had been disrupted during the conflict.

15. Despite the progress described above, some key members of the ruling party, the Front populaire ivoirien (FPI), still generally view the Marcoussis Agreement as non-workable. They contend that the Agreement is in conflict with certain provisions of the Constitution of Côte d'Ivoire and that it therefore does not constitute the basis for long-term stability in the country. On this account, they have been actively attempting to undermine the implementation of the Agreement. In the National Assembly, FPI has severely criticized the Government's draft programme for the implementation of the Agreement, particularly those aspects relating to the sensitive issues relating to citizenship, national identity and the status of foreign nationals, which lie at the core of the political crisis in the country.

16. In addition, some key political figures opposed to the Marcoussis Agreement have been working with the so-called "young patriots" loyal to FPI to foment hostile acts against Cabinet Ministers affiliated with the Forces nouvelles. In this connection, the calls by the Speaker of the National Assembly for a civil disobedience campaign against the ministers from the Forces nouvelles have resulted in serious incidents that have given rise to concerns about the security of those ministers. The most serious incident occurred on 27 June when a mob of youths attacked the Minister for Communications and the Secretary-General of MPCI, Guillaume Soro, at the premises of the national broadcasting services, Radio Télévision ivoirienne (RTI). The Forces nouvelles viewed the incident as an assassination attempt and decided to delay the commencement of the disarmament process. The military commanders of the Forces nouvelles also issued a declaration calling for the withdrawal of their ministers from the Government of National Reconciliation and imposing a state of emergency in the northern part of the country, which was later rescinded.

17. Following that incident, the Licorne forces, the ECOWAS forces and the Government jointly stepped up efforts to provide effective security for all Cabinet Ministers and political leaders. ECOWAS has deployed specialized security protection personnel as part of its peacekeeping force, while the Government has created a special protection unit within the national gendarmerie, with funding from the European Union and Canada.

18. Other disruptive activities by elements from both sides have aimed at undermining the efforts to reunify the country. These include the destruction of part of the railway line in Abidjan by the "young patriots", in order to prevent the restoration of railway services to the north, and the arrest by MPCI of officials dispatched to the north by the Government to assess the requirements for the restoration of public services in that area. The officials were later released.

19. Another important issue that continues to fuel political tensions and frustrations among the parties signatory to the Marcoussis Agreement is the stand-off over the appointments of the Ministers of Defence and the Interior. The two portfolios are currently held by acting Ministers. There is also still an impasse over the appointment of the Minister for Women's, Children's and Family Affairs. In all three cases, the President, Laurent Gbagbo, has rejected the candidates proposed by the political parties. In his address to the Security Council on 25 July, the Prime Minister indicated his intention to devote his efforts to resolving this matter as expeditiously as possible.

IV. Activities of the Monitoring Committee

20. The Monitoring Committee, which oversees the implementation of the Marcoussis Agreement under the leadership of my Special Representative, Albert Tevoedjre, has been engaged in efforts to assist the parties in addressing the challenges described above. The Committee has been meeting on a regular basis to address issues before and since the formation of the new Government. It also receives representations concerning grievances from all the political forces, and has offered explanations or mediated differences of views in the interpretation of the Marcoussis or Accra Agreements. These mediation efforts are intended to promote mutual trust among all political actors. The Committee has embarked on

encouraging civil society organizations such as non-governmental organizations, traditional rulers, women's groups, the press and parliamentary groups to make their views known on outstanding political issues, especially in the period leading to the elections scheduled for 2005. The Committee has decided to meet at least once a week to review the overall political and security situation.

V. Deployment of the Mission

21. On 27 May, Brigadier General Abdul Hafiz (Bangladesh) was appointed Chief Military Liaison Officer of MINUCI. He visited United Nations Headquarters for pre-deployment briefings from 4 to 7 June, after which he and a small group of military liaison officers were deployed in Abidjan to begin setting up the Mission's military headquarters. The group of 26 military liaison officers authorized for the initial deployment under Security Council resolution 1479 (2003) underwent pre-deployment training at the headquarters of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone in Freetown, from 16 to 22 June, after which they were deployed to MINUCI on 23 June.

22. On 4 July, the Mission deployed three teams of military liaison officers to key locations in Abidjan, including two officers at FANCI operational headquarters, one officer at the ECOWAS command headquarters, and two officers at the Licorne headquarters at Port-Bouët. Field deployments of military liaison officer teams, including two officers at the FANCI theatre command headquarters at Yamoussoukro and four officers at the Forces nouvelles headquarters at Bouaké, were completed on 9 July. In addition, two officers were deployed to Duékoué in western Côte d'Ivoire on 24 July. Those field teams are currently focusing on monitoring the security situation on a 24-hour basis and establishing liaison with all the parties, and with the ECOWAS and Licorne forces. To date, the military liaison officer teams have received a reasonable degree of cooperation from their interlocutors. A total of 13 military liaison officers are assigned to the MINUCI headquarters in Abidjan.

23. In view of the improvement in the security situation in western Côte d'Ivoire following those quadripartite deployments there, and given the monitoring and support role that MINUCI is expected to play with respect to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, the Mission has requested approval for the immediate deployment of a second group of six military liaison officers, to be followed by a third group of 10 officers, out of the remaining 50. The deployment of the requested officers has been authorized and the mobilization of the necessary personnel is under way. Pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 1479 (2003), the remaining military liaison officers will be deployed progressively as needed and when security conditions permit. It is envisaged that the pace of their deployment will be determined mainly by the volume of activities related to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, as well as monitoring and liaison requirements in western and northern Côte d'Ivoire.

24. MINUCI has developed a plan under which military liaison officers will be deployed to nine team sites as follows: one team at Bouaké with 10 officers; one team at Korhogo with 6 officers, with oversight responsibility for Ouangolo and Ferké; one team at Yamoussoukro with 6 officers, with oversight responsibility for Daoukro, Bouaflé and Mbahiakro; one team at Bondoukou with 4 officers, with

oversight responsibility for Bouna; one team at Man with 6 officers, with oversight responsibility for Odienne; one team at Duékoué with 6 officers, with oversight responsibility for Guiglo and Toulépleu; one team at Daloa with 4 officers, with oversight responsibility for Vavoua and Séguéla; one team at San-Pédro with 4 officers; and one team at Abidjan with 8 officers. As the total number of military liaison officers deployed in the field increases, the military staff at MINUCI headquarters will be reinforced with an additional nine officers, bringing the total number of military liaison officers assigned to headquarters to 22 officers. This plan will be reviewed regularly with a view to adapting it to the evolving situation on the ground and activities in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme.

VI. Human rights

25. Protection of the civilian population, especially vulnerable groups, remains a major challenge in Côte d'Ivoire. Persistent violence and lack of security continue to undermine the protection of human rights throughout the country. Although the destruction of shanty towns in Abidjan has been somewhat curbed at the initiative of mayors and as a result of court orders, several incidents have been reported recently. According to information received, some human rights defenders and civil society activists continue to receive death threats. Others have gone into exile or have been forced to hide and regularly change their location. On 5 April 2003, the office of the Mouvement ivoirien des droits de l'homme in Abidjan was looted. In the west of the country, incidents of looting in towns and villages and extorting money from civilians continue to be reported, but on a lesser scale since the creation of the zone of confidence.

26. In March 2003, an independent Ministry of Human Rights was established, replacing the human rights portfolio which until then had been under the authority of the Minister of Justice. Another positive development is the Government's agreement in principle to visits by the special rapporteurs of the Commission on Human Rights on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, as well as by my Special Representative on internally displaced persons.

27. In response to a request by President Gbagbo in a letter dated 21 February 2003, I dispatched an advance team to Côte d'Ivoire to conduct a feasibility study on the establishment of an international commission of inquiry into human rights violations committed during the conflict. The team, which was led by the Office of the United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), visited Abidjan, Bouaké, Korhogo, Man, Bangolo, Duékoué and Yamoussoukro from 27 February to 22 March. It also met with the Chief of Staff of FANCI, General Dary and General Beth of the French Licorne forces, representatives of the diplomatic community, a cross-section of civil society, and my Special Representative and the United Nations country team.

28. The team concluded that the establishment of an international commission of inquiry was widely supported by most interlocutors, including the Government of National Reconciliation and United Nations bodies, such as the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. My Special Representative, in consultation

with the High Commissioner for Human Rights, will advise on the next steps when conditions on the ground permit the launching of the commission.

29. A senior human rights adviser and a small team of human rights officers, including a gender specialist and child protection officers, have been assigned to MINUCI. The Mission's activities relating to human rights will be primarily to facilitate and provide assistance in the implementation of the human rights-related provisions of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement, as well as to monitor and report on the situation of human rights in Côte d'Ivoire, with specific attention to the rights of women and children, including child combatants.

30. Earlier in February 2003, OHCHR fielded a senior human rights officer to assist the United Nations country team. OHCHR, UNDP and the MINUCI human rights officers will continue to assist the Government in the establishment of an independent National Human Rights Commission and in the development of a National Human Rights Action Plan.

31. UNDP has commenced implementation of the ABRIS programme which is intended to provide targeted humanitarian assistance to affected communities in order to create conditions for post-conflict economic recovery. The programme applies a human rights framework that ensures that special conditions are created to protect vulnerable groups, guarantee transparency and promote respect for all stakeholders in a discrimination-free context. These concepts were operationalized in a training package aimed at three test groups. Training was conducted in Yamoussoukro and Bouaflé in June 2003, and included local government authorities, development support agencies and territorial administrative authorities. Late in June, 10 young human rights activists were trained and a session was organized for some 40 journalists and other media personnel from 23 to 25 July. Another training package will be provided to 40 human rights defenders and members of non-governmental and civil service organizations in August in Bouaké.

32. The United Nations country team has also established a sectoral group on protection, open to participation by all United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations and other civil society organizations. With a view to ensuring better protection for victims of human rights violations, the group has focused on issues of access, the illegal destruction of shanty towns, the elimination of discriminatory violence, hate media, and emphasizing the civilian status of camps for refugees and the internally displaced. Under the leadership of the country team's senior human rights adviser, the group developed a strategy document on protection, and contributed to the formulation of a code of conduct for humanitarian action.

VII. Public information and media issues

33. Since the formation of the Government of National Reconciliation in March 2003, the press has closely examined its role and acknowledged its responsibility in aggravating tensions as "partisan, petty and subservient to political parties which are at the same time their sponsors and their partners".

34. Several significant facts and initiatives have shown that the press as a whole and the State media, in particular, have fallen, willingly or reluctantly, into line with the reconciliation and peace process. Measures taken by the press include the creation of an Association of Journalists for Peace and Reconciliation following a

seminar organized by the International Media Action, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and UNDP. The seminar was attended by all journalists from the south and the north of the country.

35. Following the incident at the premises of Radio Télévision ivoirienne, where there was an attempt on the life of the Minister for Communications, the new Interim Director-General and Interim Secretary-General pledged, during the hand-over ceremony, to guarantee the impartiality and objectivity of the press and to turn RTI into an active instrument that would broadcast messages of peace and reconciliation. The Government has also decided to strengthen the powers of the Observatoire de la liberté de la presse, de l'éthique et de la déontologie (OLPED), as the watchdog of the media, by authorizing it to sanction all articles that tend to provoke hatred or division and aggravate tensions.

36. Despite resistance, the Government should be able to adopt a press law, which would make it possible to set up a new legal framework to make the press move away from its financial dependence on political parties. This process will take time, since the forthcoming election period will certainly revive opposition and political wrangling.

VIII. Humanitarian aspects

37. The humanitarian situation in Côte d'Ivoire remains worrisome. Half a million people, mainly Burkinabè, Malians and Guinean migrant workers, have fled Côte d'Ivoire, either by their own means or with the support of their embassies, as a result of xenophobia and ethnic tensions. In addition, an estimated 800,000 people are internally displaced. Many children have been separated from their families and several hundreds recruited by all sides of the conflict. The breakdown of basic social services in areas outside government control has led to a desperate situation in the north and the west.

38. The situation of Liberian refugees in the western part of the country remains precarious. Of the 87,000 Liberian refugees who stayed in western Côte d'Ivoire in the *zone d'accueil des réfugiés* in 2002, only 36,800 have remained in the country. The only refugee camp in Côte d'Ivoire, Nicla Camp, currently hosts about 4,000 Liberian refugees. Many refugees had returned to Liberia despite the deteriorating situation there. Meanwhile, the recent escalation of the conflict in Liberia has led to a new exodus of more than 33,000 Liberians across the border into south-western Côte d'Ivoire. Hostility towards those who have remained or those who have recently arrived continues, because of the perceived involvement of armed Liberian elements in the Côte d'Ivoire conflict.

39. The International Organization for Migration has assisted the voluntary repatriation of over 1,000 foreign nationals from south-western Côte d'Ivoire since mid-July, and almost half of the 8,500 mostly Burkinabè migrant workers, who are accommodated in four transit centres in the western town of Guiglo, have registered for voluntary repatriation. Furthermore, UNICEF and some non-governmental organizations have been advocating with military entities against the use of child soldiers. Save the Children, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and others are actively identifying children separated from their families or unaccompanied, including ex-combatants, throughout the country.

40. Food security has become noticeably precarious in the north and the west. In the north, the de facto partitioning of the country has seriously affected the economic situation and, thus, the nutritional status of the population. Owing to the violence, displacement and lack of access to land over the past months, households have been forced to consume their seed stocks, thus jeopardizing production in the next planting season. As 68 per cent of women work in the area of agriculture, they and their households are particularly affected. Moreover, the large number of internally displaced persons is negatively affecting the food security of host communities, as some 80 per cent of the internally displaced are currently living with host families. Over 3,000 malnourished children have been identified and treated to date by Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) and Merlin in the west. The World Food Programme (WFP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations urgently require funding to provide seeds and tools to some 10,000 small farmers in the west. WFP, in close collaboration with all partners involved, will establish a food security monitoring system to better target, track and plan interventions.

41. The governmental and administrative structures that supported the health-care system have completely receded in the north and west by virtue of the country's partition. Over 80 per cent of health personnel in that part of the country have abandoned their posts and 70 per cent of health infrastructures are closed. An array of non-governmental organizations, including Médecins du Monde, MSF, Merlin, ICRC and the Ivorian Red Cross, have been providing health care and support to medical facilities in the west and north. While the United Nations and international non-governmental organizations and ICRC partners currently attempt to fill the vacuum of the collapsed system through limited primary and secondary interventions, essential programmes such as reproductive health, family planning and vaccination programmes are unavailable to the population. Fortunately, immunization and vaccination programmes, particularly for measles, formerly run by the international non-governmental organizations, will now be reactivated by the authorities in charge, with the support of UNICEF and the World Health Organization.

42. More than 1 million primary school children have had their school year disrupted by the conflict. In Government-controlled areas, schools continue to function, and over 60,000 internally displaced children are attending supplementary schools established to receive the overflow. In northern zones, schools have been officially closed because of insecurity, although unofficial education activities have continued in many areas, including activities supported by religious organizations and civic groups, as well as UNICEF through the School for All programme and WFP through school canteen programmes. The Ministry of Education has recently annulled its decision to declare the school year null and void for zones formerly under rebel control. An evaluation system is being elaborated to determine which students will have their school year validated, and make-up courses are envisioned for the summer.

43. Overall coordination of international humanitarian activities is carried out through the Secretary-General's Humanitarian Envoy for the Crisis in Côte d'Ivoire, Carolyn McAskie. An Inter-Agency Humanitarian Coordination Committee was established in February 2003, pending the appointment of a Humanitarian Coordinator for Côte d'Ivoire, so as to ensure complementarity of humanitarian operations. The Inter-Agency Committee has drafted a strategy for assistance to

internally displaced persons, which will be submitted for consideration to the newly established Inter-Ministry Humanitarian Coordination Committee. The Inter-Agency Committee will work closely with this new committee to improve cooperation and coordination between the humanitarian community and government ministries. The humanitarian community is battling a lack of resources in its attempt to address the overwhelming needs of returning displaced populations and the rehabilitation of communities. The Inter-Agency Consolidated Appeal for Côte d'Ivoire and the five most affected neighbours, which was launched on 29 April 2003, has received only 20 per cent of the total requirements of $91 million.

IX. Economic and social recovery

44. Côte d'Ivoire continues to face a severe economic and social crisis, which has had adverse repercussions on the entire West African subregion. The neighbouring countries Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali and the Niger, which are heavily dependent on Côte d'Ivoire's transport facilities for imports and exports, and on remittances from their migrant nationals, have been the worst affected by the Ivorian crisis.

45. The optimistic projections of 3 per cent growth in 2002 for Côte d'Ivoire's economy have been revised downwards, to –1.2 per cent. The primary sector has witnessed the smallest contraction (0.9 per cent), while the secondary and tertiary sectors have been the most affected, with contractions of 3.8 and 5.3 per cent, respectively. In the agricultural sector, the production and marketing of cotton, sugar cane, tobacco and cashew nuts have been seriously eroded. Private sector activity is in a deep depression, and the country's business risk rating has deteriorated drastically. The hotel industry continues to experience operational losses and, according to the National Federation of Industries and Services, activities have dropped by 25 to 100 per cent since September 2002.

46. For the year 2002, Government revenues reached 1,517.8 billion CFA francs against projections of 1,473 billion CFA francs and reflected an improvement in fiscal and non-fiscal revenues. However, increases in public expenditures, in particular military expenditures to support the war effort, resulted in an overall treasury deficit of 91.8 billion CFA francs.

47. Trade with the rest of the world has been negatively affected by the freezing of credit lines and by the disruption and interruption of port facilities. Despite the unfavourable economic trends reported above, however, the country has witnessed an improvement in the external trade balance, essentially owing to substantial increases in prices of export products combined with a reduction in the value of imports. Overall, in spite of a negative balance of the services account, the current account stood at a positive balance of 532.7 billion CFA francs.

48. At the monetary level, the crisis in the country has provoked a tightening and curtailment of public bank lending. Bank branches in the interior and in the war zones have closed and lending operations are being directed towards other countries of the West African Economic and Monetary Union. Prices of basic commodities have risen, and there is a shortage of products originating from the war zones.

49. Meanwhile, there has been a sharp decline in the flow of external resources to Côte d'Ivoire since the outbreak of the fighting. Support from the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative stood at 225 billion CFA francs by the end of

2002. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have put on hold disbursements of the second tranche of the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility and the second tranche of the economic recovery credit. Côte d'Ivoire, however, has continued to respect its debt obligations towards IMF and the World Bank.

50. At the end of June 2003, the World Bank and IMF dispatched an evaluation mission to Côte d'Ivoire to review the country's macroeconomic performance over the past year, the perspectives in terms of the socio-economic recovery and the resumption of their respective cooperation programmes. While the findings of the mission have not yet been released, it constitutes the first step towards a multi-donor assessment and programming mission planned later in the year.

51. The recent visit of the Prime Minister to Europe and North America is part of the Government's strategy to mobilize the partnerships and resources needed to support the implementation of the national reconstruction programme that it intends to finalize in the coming months. The European Commission has already adopted an immediate post-crisis rehabilitation programme of €30 million (national reconciliation, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, economic and social rehabilitation for internally displaced persons) for Côte d'Ivoire.

52. The Government is also considering additional fiscal and non-fiscal measures intended to boost private sector performance and put the country on the road to social and economic recovery.

X. Financial aspects

53. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1479 (2003), I have obtained from the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions commitment authority in the amount of $14 million to meet the cost of the most essential and immediate start-up requirements of MINUCI for the period from 13 May to 31 December 2003. The proposed budget for MINUCI is under preparation and will take full account of the Mission's resource requirements for the period from 13 May 2003 to 30 June 2004. I shall request the General Assembly to take action on the budget during the main part of its fifty-eighth session. As at 30 June 2003, the total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations amounted to $1,108.6 million.

XI. Observations

54. The Ivorian peace process has made encouraging progress in the six months that have passed since the signing of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement. In particular, the installation of the Government of National Reconciliation, the preparation of the Government's work programme, the confidence-building steps that have been taken by FANCI and the Forces nouvelles, the adoption of an amnesty law, the development of a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, and the extension of the ceasefire line to the hitherto inaccessible western part of the country have laid a good basis for further progress towards the full implementation of the Marcoussis Agreement, which should lead to the final goal of holding free and fair elections in October 2005.

55. Considering the delicate issues that need to be addressed, as indicated in the Government's programme of work, the preparations for those elections must begin early. The United Nations stands ready to provide appropriate support in the organization and conduct of the elections, should the Government of National Reconciliation request such support. It will also be necessary for other international partners to extend assistance to Côte d'Ivoire in the preparations for the elections.

56. The road ahead is long, and the peace process is fraught with pitfalls and contradictions that have to be surmounted. The hostilities between FANCI and the Forces nouvelles have ended, but peace is not yet at hand. Although the Government of National Reconciliation is functioning, it remains incomplete and often works in disharmony. The Government has taken significant steps towards implementing the Marcoussis Agreement, but all parties have yet to demonstrate their full commitment to the Agreement.

57. These contradictions must be resolved, in order to create a climate conducive to a constructive discussion by the National Assembly of the crucial issues presented in the Government's work programme. In this regard, I appeal to the Ivorian parties to make the concessions necessary to end the impasse over the appointments to the still vacant portfolios of Defence, the Interior, and Women's, Children's and Family Affairs. I also urge the FPI party and the Ivorian law enforcement authorities to curb the activities of militias, thuggish groups and individuals who seek to undermine the peace process. FANCI should consider a moratorium on purchasing new weapons, while the National Assembly should pursue the efforts to adopt new legislation aimed at ensuring a more independent and responsible press.

58. For their part, the Forces nouvelles must end the de facto partitioning of the country and cooperate with the efforts of the Government of National Reconciliation to extend State authority throughout the territory of Côte d'Ivoire. The continuing control of the northern part of the country by commanders of the Forces nouvelles seriously constrains the Government's ability to extend its authority and hampers the process of national reconciliation, as well as the free movement of people, goods and services in the country. Now that they are part of the new Government, the Forces nouvelles cannot continue to run a parallel administration in the northern part of the country. I also urge the Forces nouvelles to adhere to the timetable for disarmament set out by the Government of National Reconciliation and to continue their confidence-building dialogue with FANCI.

59. The presence of the Licorne and ECOWAS forces remains indispensable if the prevailing, albeit fragile, stability is to be sustained. I commend those forces for their excellent work under difficult conditions and with limited resources. At the same time, I am deeply concerned about the financial difficulties that the ECOWAS forces continue to face. Particularly worrisome are the indications that, unless they receive the necessary funding, the ECOWAS forces may not be able to perform the functions assigned to them under the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. The lack of adequate funding may also jeopardize the operations to sustain stability in the sensitive border areas, for which the ECOWAS force requires additional troops. I therefore wish to appeal to Member States to provide the requisite financial assistance to these forces on an urgent basis.

60. The deployment of the military and civilian personnel of MINUCI continues to make satisfactory progress, and the Mission is engaged in important monitoring and liaison activities that complement the peacekeeping operations of the Licorne and

ECOWAS forces. The Mission is also coordinating the activities of the Monitoring Committee and performing monitoring activities with respect to the human rights situation and the media, and is preparing to assist in the implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme.

61. The critical humanitarian crisis created by the conflict and the dislocation of Côte d'Ivoire's economy continue to present serious challenges. While the international community is committed to assisting the country in addressing those challenges, the onus remains on the Government and on all Ivorian parties to take the necessary measures to create a security climate conducive to the safe delivery of humanitarian assistance, and to restore the confidence of its partners in its economic recovery and development programme.

62. I wish to commend the efforts of the Government of National Reconciliation to improve relations with its neighbours and to restore trade links with Burkina Faso and Mali. However, I remain concerned about the existence of armed Liberian elements that are reportedly still operating in some areas of western Côte d'Ivoire. These elements constitute an immediate and a long-term threat to the efforts to stabilize both Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia. I nevertheless feel greatly encouraged about the ongoing efforts of ECOWAS and the Security Council to resolve the conflict in Liberia, which has been the primary source of instability in the subregion. I believe that the ongoing efforts to launch a multinational force and, subsequently, a peacekeeping operation in Liberia will open up possibilities for addressing cross-cutting regional issues, such as the use of child soldiers and mercenaries, and the exploitation of national resources to fuel conflicts. Pursuant to the request of the Security Council in its presidential statement of 25 July (S/PRST/2003/11), I have asked my Special Representative for West Africa to conduct a comprehensive study on these issues in close consultation with my Special Representatives in Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Sierra Leone, as well as other partners, which would enable me to submit recommendations to the Council on how they could be addressed through enhanced coordination among the United Nations operations in the subregion.

63. In conclusion, I wish to express my appreciation to the Security Council and to ECOWAS and donor countries for their continued support to MINUCI. I also commend my Special Representative, Albert Tevoedjre, all MINUCI civilian and military personnel and other United Nations agencies, as well as other humanitarian and development partners, for their efforts in supporting the peace process and in addressing the humanitarian crisis in Côte d'Ivoire during the reporting period.

Annex

United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire: contributions as at 13 August 2003

Authorized military strength: 76 military liaison officers

Country	*Military liaison officers*	*Total*
Austria	1	1
Bangladesh	2	2
Benin	2	2
Ghana	1	1
Jordan	2	2
India	1	1
Ireland	2	2
Kenya	1	1
Nepal	1	1
Niger	1	1
Nigeria	2	2
Pakistan	1	1
Paraguay	2	2
Poland	1	1
Republic of Moldova	1	1
Romania	1	1
Senegal	2	2
Tunisia	1	1
Uruguay	1	1
Total	**26**	**26**

Chief Military Liaison Officer: Bangladesh

Map No. 4203 Rev. 2 UNITED NATIONS
August 2003

Department of Public Information
Cartographic Section

United Nations S/2003/802

Security Council

Distr.: General
11 August 2003

Original: English

Letter dated 6 August 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement on the Ad Hoc Human Rights Tribunal for Crimes Committed in East Timor issued on 6 August 2003 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union (see annex).

I would be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Marcello **Spatafora**
Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations

03-46426 (E) 120803

Annex to the letter dated 6 August 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Statement on the Ad Hoc Human Rights Tribunal for Crimes Committed in East Timor issued on 6 August 2003 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union

The European Union welcomes the establishment of the Ad Hoc Human Rights Tribunal for Crimes Committed in East Timor. This was a crucial first step in bringing to justice those persons responsible for human rights violations committed in East Timor in 1999, and was in accordance with the concerns of the United Nations Security Council.

However, the trials recently completed, with the last verdict delivered by the Ad Hoc Tribunal on 5 August, have failed to deliver justice and did not result in a substantiated account of the violence.

The European Union is disappointed that the prosecutors did not submit all the evidence, especially that referred to by United Nations investigators and the Indonesian National Commission on Human Rights in their reports, suggesting that elements of the military, police and civil government had allegedly funded, trained and abetted local militia groups. Besides, no officials from United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET), or members of independent observer missions, and only a few "victim witnesses" from Timor-Leste, were called to testify by the prosecutors.

These deficiencies in the process have jeopardized the credibility of the verdicts, which were disproportionate to the seriousness of the crimes committed.

The European Union would like to underline that ensuring the accountability of all perpetrators of serious human rights violations would enhance trust in the judiciary and contribute to reconciliation. That is why it is of paramount importance that the Indonesian judicial authorities ensure that the appeal process is conducted in a manner consistent with international legal standards and that the appeal judgements are set out in accordance with the principle of transparency.

The European Union also urges the Indonesian Government to implement the recommendations made on reforming the judicial system contained in the report by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers. At the same time, the European Union encourages the relevant authorities to take the necessary steps to improve proceedings for future trials of cases involving human rights violations, such as the Tanjung Priok cases.

The European Union regrets that the Sander Thoenes case was not brought before the Ad Hoc Tribunal, and reiterates once again the urgency of bringing the perpetrators of his murder to justice without further delay and in accordance with international standards.

The acceding countries Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, the associated countries Bulgaria and Romania, and the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

United Nations S/2003/803

Security Council

Distr.: General
11 August 2003
English
Original: English and French

Draft resolution

The Security Council,

Recalling its previous relevant resolutions and statements of its President on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in particular resolutions 1457 and 1493 (2003),

Welcoming recent progress in the political process and the establishment of the transitional government in the Democratic Republic of the Congo,

Noting with great concern that the plundering of natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo continues, especially in the eastern part of the country, as reported to the Council in an interim briefing, on 24 July 2003, from the Chairman of the Expert Panel on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (hereinafter "the Panel"), and *stressing* that appropriate action should be taken with regard to those responsible for such activities,

Taking note of the Panel's efforts to establish constructive dialogue with individuals, companies and States named in its report (S/2002/1146) of 15 October 2002,

Welcoming the publication, as an attachment to the Panel's report, of the reactions of those individuals, companies and States,

Recognizing that exchanging information and attempting to resolve issues will help the transparency of the Panel's work as well as heighten awareness of the illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the context of the conflict and, in particular, its connection with the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons,

Taking note of the Panel's intent, in accordance with paragraph 9 of resolution 1457, to remove from the annexes attached to its report the names of those parties with which it has or will have reached a resolution by the end of its mandate,

Renewing its support to the Panel in its efforts to secure, including through dialogue with parties named in its last report, particularly with governments concerned, a clearer picture of activities related to the illegal exploitation of natural resources in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and to update its findings during the remainder of its mandate period,

03-46633 (E) 130803

1. *Requests* the Secretary-General to extend the mandate of the Panel until 31 October 2003 to enable it to complete the remaining elements of its mandate, at the end of which the Panel will submit a final report to the Council;

2. *Reiterates its demand* that all States concerned take immediate steps to end the illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth in the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

3. *Requests* the Panel to provide the necessary information to the governments concerned as required in paragraph 12 and 13 of resolution 1457, with due regard to safety of sources, in order to enable them, if necessary, to take appropriate action according to their national laws and international obligations;

4. *Calls on* all States to respect the relevant Security Council resolutions in this regard;

5. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.

United Nations A/57/856–S/2003/804

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
11 August 2003
English
Original: Arabic

General Assembly
Fifty-seventh session
Agenda items 36 and 160

Security Council
Fifty-eighth year

The situation in the Middle East

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Identical letters dated 11 August 2003 from the Charge d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I wish to draw your attention to the dangerous and provocative violations and acts of aggression that Israel continues on a daily basis to commit against Lebanon by air, on land and at sea, in flagrant breach of the Blue Line and the provisions of Security Council resolution 425 (1978), thereby posing a threat to stability and creating an atmosphere of tension in the region.

As the Secretary-General noted in the report he submitted to the Security Council on 23 July 2003 (S/2003/728), in his description of the situation in the area of operation of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL): "Israeli air incursions into Lebanon increased overall during the reporting period, though the numbers have declined since early July. UNIFIL recorded almost daily violations across the Blue Line in some weeks. As in the past, many Israeli overflights penetrated deep into Lebanon, often generating sonic booms over populated areas. The pattern identified in my previous reports continued, whereby some aircraft would fly out to sea and enter Lebanese airspace north of the UNIFIL area of operation, thus avoiding direct observation and verification by UNIFIL. These overflights are widely observed by civilians, United Nations personnel and other members of the international community, and reported to UNIFIL by the Lebanese authorities. Israeli air incursions continued despite frequent calls by United Nations officials and a number of concerned Member States that Israel cease these violations."

At dawn today, Israeli military aircraft made overflights at low altitude, breaking the sound barrier over the capital, Beirut, and causing two powerful sonic booms, the sole purpose of which was to alarm the civilian population. As is indicated in the annexed list of violations and acts of aggression that were recorded

03-46533 (E) 130803 130803

by the Lebanese armed forces during the period from 2 to 10 August 2003, Israel has continued to violate Lebanese airspace in the manner to which the Secretary-General referred in his last and other earlier reports. Furthermore, Israeli forces have fired shells and artillery rounds at the environs of the occupied Shab'a farms and the Lebanese border regions. Those violations constitute a small section of the long series of daily and continuing violations of the Blue Line that Israel persists in committing against Lebanon of which we have informed you in previous letters, the most recent being that which appeared as document A/57/844-S/2003/698 dated 10 July 2003. Those Israeli violations and acts of aggression are continuing and, in most cases, extend deep inside Lebanese territory, terrorizing and tormenting the Lebanese civilian population and causing material damage, regardless of repeated calls to Israel from the United Nations and the international community to desist and Lebanon's continual warnings of their dangers and consequences.

While Israel carries out these violations and acts of aggression against Lebanon in a deliberate, programmed and continuous manner, the actions of the Lebanese resistance constitute a reaction to the reality of occupation and to the persistent Israeli violations and acts of aggression that the Secretary-General has described in his successive reports to the Security Council as provocative. The word "provocative" indicates the possibility of a reaction. In this context, Lebanon considers it important to affirm that the actions of the Lebanese resistance are aimed solely against Israeli military targets within occupied Lebanese territory, which Israel itself recognizes as occupied territory, or against Israeli military aircraft that violate Lebanese airspace.

In view of the foregoing, Lebanon calls upon the international community to take the necessary measures to halt the Israeli violations and acts of aggression against Lebanon that constitute a source of instability in the region and threaten international security and peace. Lebanon reserves the right to act as it sees fit in the light of developments in the situation, including the right to urge the Security Council to convene.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 36 and 160, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Houssam **Diab**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

Annex to the identical letters dated 11 August 2003 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

The most recent Israeli violations and acts of aggression against Lebanon

2 August 2003

At 0600 hours a reconnaissance aircraft violated Lebanese airspace off the coast at Sidon and made a circular overflight between Beirut and Sa`diyat. It left at 0900 hours from the coast at Naqurah. During that period, at 0815 hours, a member of the resistance was assassinated when his car was blown up in Kfayyat in the southern suburbs.

3 August 2003

At 1010 and 1230 hours military aircraft overflew the Lebanese areas adjacent to the border and were met with land-based anti-aircraft fire from the resistance.

At 2220 hours two surveillance aircraft violated Lebanese airspace off the coast at Na`imah. They left at 0215 hours on 4 August 2003 from the coast at Naqurah.

4 August 2003

Between 1250 and 1320 hours two helicopters overflew the occupied Shab'a farms.

At 2250 hours a reconnaissance aircraft violated Lebanese airspace off the coast at Sidon and made a circular overflight between Sidon and Beirut. It left at 0200 hours on 5 August 2003 from the coast at Naqurah.

5 August 2003

Between 1045 and 1140 hours enemy forces intermittently fired 120-mm mortar rounds from their post at Ramta. The rounds fell inside the Shab'a farms.

Between 2100 and 2200 hours two helicopters overflew the occupied Shab'a farms.

6 August 2003

At various times between 1040 and 1515 hours and at 2030 hours military aircraft overflew the occupied Shab'a farms.

7 August 2003

At various times between 0805 and 2230 hours two helicopters made three overflights of the occupied Shab'a farms.

8 August 2003

Between 0955 and 1140 hours enemy forces fired a number of artillery and mortar rounds from their posts inside the occupied Shab'a farms, while military

aircraft attacked the environs of Kafr Shuba, Rashayya al-Fukhkhar and Ibil al-Saqy, dropping eight air-ground missiles. They were met with land-based anti-aircraft fire from the resistance.

9 August 2003

Between 1200 and 1240 hours a surveillance plane overflew the occupied Shab'a farms.

10 August 2003

Between 1150 and 1230 hours military aircraft overflew the border areas near Naqurah and Bint Jubayl at various altitudes and were met with land-based anti-aircraft fire from the resistance.

At 1300 hours the enemy Israeli radio announced that several anti-aircraft shells which had been fired on military aircraft had fallen on the settlement of Shlomi in the western sector.

Between 1600 and 1735 hours military and reconnaissance aircraft flying at various altitudes overflew the regions of Tyre and Bint Jubayl. At 1620 hours and 1635 hours they attacked the environs of Tayr Harfa in the Wadi al-Zarqa region, firing two air-ground missiles.

Between 1640 and 1650 hours the enemy Israeli forces fired four 120-mm mortar rounds from within the occupied Palestinian territories. The rounds fell in Wadi al-Muthlim between Ramiyah and Bayt Lif.

Between 1750 and 1800 hours the sound of several explosions was heard inside the occupied Shab'a farms. The reason for those explosions was unknown.

In addition to the violations committed in the air and on the ground, Israeli boats on a daily basis fire flares and salvoes from the point where the territorial waters of Lebanon meet those of Palestine.

United Nations S/2003/805

Security Council

Distr.: General
12 August 2003
English
Original: Spanish

Letter dated 11 August 2003 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Spain to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Spain (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Ana Maria **Menendez**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

03-46408 (E) 190803 200803

Annex to the letter dated 11 August 2003 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Spain to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: English]

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Spain (July 2003)

Introduction

The numbers

July was a busy month. A total of 33 meetings were held during the month: 12 public meetings, 5 open briefings, 12 sessions of informal consultations and 4 private meetings.

During July, the Security Council adopted seven resolutions: resolution 1490 (2003) on UNIKOM, 1491 (2003) on SFOR, 1492 (2003) on UNAMSIL, 1493 (2003) on MONUC, 1494 (2003) on UNOMIG, 1495 (2003) on MINURSO and 1496 (2003) on UNIFIL. All of them were adopted unanimously.

The Council also adopted three presidential statements, on Ethiopia/Eritrea, Côte d'Ivoire and the follow-up to the reports of the missions of the Security Council to Central and West Africa.

Moreover the Council issued five statements to the press, on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Somalia and Liberia.

The priorities

As an elected member of the Council, Spain has put into practice what it has always supported as a non-member: transparency, as exemplified in the number of public and open meetings held during its presidency of the Council; at 17, they outnumbered the closed consultations (12 sessions). Daily briefings to non-members after closed consultations as well as weekly briefings to its main constituency, the European Union, were held by the presidency.

As to the issues on the agenda of the Council, Iraq was the subject of a monthly open briefing at which the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Sergio Vieira de Mello, made his first presentation to the Council in implementation of the provisions of resolution 1483 (2003). In accordance with rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, three members of the Governing Council of Iraq participated in the meeting. Informal discussions continued after the open session in the course of a luncheon with the Secretary-General.

African issues figured very prominently in the Spanish presidency's agenda.

A session of closed consultations was entirely devoted to a briefing by the Secretary-General on the occasion of his participation in the African Union summit in Maputo, focusing on the situations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Liberia and the Sudan.

Western Sahara was an issue of high priority for the presidency. The triple objective of going beyond a mere technical rollover, supporting the latest Baker plan and reaching consensus was achieved, after laborious negotiations, through the adoption of resolution 1495 (2003).

Three meetings were devoted to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, one open briefing focusing on human rights violations, a public meeting at which the High Representative of the European Union briefed the Council, inter alia, on the Interim Emergency Multinational Force in Bunia, and a closed meeting on the Panel of Experts.

Burundi, the Central African Republic, Somalia and Ethiopia/Eritrea were also discussed in informal consultations, as was Liberia on three occasions; on the last of the three, a draft resolution was introduced in response to two letters from the Secretary-General proposing the deployment of a vanguard force of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), followed by a multinational force and a peacekeeping operation. The Prime Minister of Côte d'Ivoire came to brief the Council at an open meeting.

Counter-terrorism was another priority matter. The three-monthly reports of the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) were introduced and considered at two public meetings.

The practice of holding a monthly open briefing on the Middle East followed by closed consultations was maintained.

Africa

Western Sahara

During the month of July 2003, the Security Council examined the latest report of the Secretary-General on Western Sahara, in which he recommended that the Council endorse the peace plan for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara presented by his Special Envoy, James Baker III, and extend the MINURSO mandate, which was due to expire on 31 July.

On 11 July, the Council held informal consultations in which members considered the latest proposal of the Special Envoy. In the course of the consultations the delegation of the United States of America distributed a draft resolution which supported the peace plan and proposed a three-month extension of the MINURSO mandate. This text was first negotiated at three meetings of the Group of Friends of Western Sahara and then of another three informal, expert-level meetings of Council members.

Finally, after another session of informal consultations on 30 July, at which the main sponsor of the draft incorporated amendments to meet the concerns expressed by some Council members, inter alia, about the fact that no solution should be imposed on the parties, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1495 (2003), in which it strongly supported the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy and similarly supported the peace plan for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara as an optimum political solution on the basis of agreement between the two parties; and called on the parties to work with the United Nations and with each other towards acceptance and implementation of the peace plan. By resolution 1495 (2003) the Council also extended the mandate of MINURSO until 31 October 2003.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 7 July the Security Council held an open meeting to hear briefings by the Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, Bertrand G. Ramcharan, and the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, on two reports (S/2003/674) about the events which occurred in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in December 2002 and January 2003 in Mambassa, and on 3 April 2003 in Drodro, respectively.

On 18 July the Council held a public meeting on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Council heard presentations by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, the former Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Amos Namanga Ngongi, and the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union, Javier Solana. After statements by members of the Council, the representatives of Bangladesh, Brazil, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Indonesia, Japan, Nepal, the Philippines, Rwanda and South Africa made statements before the Council. During the meeting different aspects of the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo were addressed, such as the situation in the eastern part of the country including the European Union-led Interim Emergency Multinational Force in Bunia, the future mandate of MONUC, and future challenges for the Transitional Government and the peace process in general.

On 24 July the Council held informal consultations on the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In his briefing, the Chairman of the Panel, Ambassador Mahmoud Kassem, updated the Council on the Panel's interactions with Governments, companies and individuals concerned and on the situation of the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Taking into account the complexity of the tasks included in the mandate of the Panel, he requested an extension of the Panel's mandate. A draft presidential statement was introduced to consider the extension of the mandate.

On 28 July the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1493 (2003), by which it extended the mandate of MONUC until 30 July 2004. The resolution provides MONUC with a robust mandate under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations and authorizes the increasing of its military strength to 10,800 personnel. It imposes an arms embargo on Ituri and the Kivus.

Central African Republic

On 15 July the Security Council held consultations to consider the latest report of the Secretary-General on the Central African Republic (S/2003/661). Members of the Council heard a briefing by the Representative of the Secretary-General, General Lamine Cissé, on the situation in the Central African Republic and the activities of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in that country (BONUCA). General Cissé stressed the problem of security in the country, expressed concern about the human rights situation and made an appeal to the international community to resume assistance to the Central African Republic.

Members of the Council invited the Central African authorities to fulfil their commitment to organize an inclusive national dialogue and to respect the timetable

agreed for the return to constitutional legality, especially the holding of presidential elections before the end of 2004.

Members of the Council expressed their concern at the continuing insecurity and human rights violations in the Central African Republic. They insisted on the need for BONUCA to continue its inquiries into human rights violations and to continue to work to strengthen national capacities regarding the rule of law.

Members of the Council reiterated their support for the efforts of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community and the African Union. They called on all Member States to provide financial or logistical support to the multinational force.

Members of the Council called on bilateral and multilateral donors to provide support to the Central African authorities in order to bring about the return to constitutional order and a lasting peace.

Burundi

On 10 July members of the Security Council held informal consultations on the situation in Burundi. They heard a briefing by the Secretariat on the latest resumption of hostilities and the deterioration of the humanitarian situation.

Council members strongly condemned the offensive launched on Bujumbura since 7 July by the PALIPEHUTU-FNL (Rwasa) rebel faction. They called upon FNL to put an immediate and unconditional end to its offensive, and to enter into serious negotiations with the Transitional Government without further delay.

Members of the Council also called upon CNDD-FDD to stop resorting to violence and to refrain from any further action undermining the peace process.

They reiterated their call upon all the parties, especially CNDD-FDD (Nkurunziza) and FNL (Rwasa) and including the Transitional Government, to engage in good faith in the search for a peaceful solution through dialogue on all outstanding issues, and urged them once more to abide by the agreements they had signed.

Council members reaffirmed their support for the African Mission in Burundi. They commended the progress it had helped to produce so far in the cantonment of rebel combatants, and called on all concerned to provide, as a matter of urgency, adequate financial and logistical assistance to the Mission.

Members of the Council urged States in the region to exert their positive influence on the Burundian rebel groups and welcomed the proposal to convene, as soon as possible, a summit of the Regional Initiative to help in the resolution of outstanding issues.

Sierra Leone

On 14 July the Security Council held informal consultations to consider the latest report of the Secretary-General on UNAMSIL (S/2003/663). Members of the Council agreed that the Council should respond quickly to the Secretary-General's recommendation on the UNAMSIL drawdown. On 18 July, by unanimously adopting resolution 1492 (2003), the Council approved the recommendation of the Secretary-General contained in paragraph 68 of his report. Therefore, the drawdown of UNAMSIL should proceed, according to the modified status quo option, towards withdrawal by December 2004.

Côte d'Ivoire

On 25 July the Security Council held an open briefing on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire. The Council heard a presentation by the Prime Minister of Côte d'Ivoire, Seydou Diarra. At the end of the meeting the Security Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2003/11), in which it reiterated the need for Ivorian political forces to implement fully and without delay all the provisions of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement and the agreement signed at Accra on 8 March 2003. The Council took note with satisfaction of the formation of the government of national reconciliation and the progress made in the peace process so far.

The Council emphasized that much remained to be done to achieve the full implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement and called on Ivorian political forces to redouble their efforts in a number of areas.

The Council reiterated its full support for the efforts of ECOWAS and France in contributing to a peaceful solution to the crisis, and called on Member States to continue to respond to the appeal made at the donors' conference in Paris on 18 July and to provide logistic and financial support to the ECOWAS Mission in Côte d'Ivoire.

The Council expressed its concern at the continuing existence of regional factors of instability, and requested the Secretary-General to submit recommendations to the Council as soon as possible on ways to combat subregional and cross-border problems, focusing in particular on better coordination of United Nations efforts.

On 31 July members of the Council reached agreement on a draft resolution to renew for six months the authorization given to Member States participating in ECOWAS forces together with French forces supporting them.

Liberia

On 24 July the Security Council held informal consultations on the situation on Liberia. The Council heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Liberia, Jacques Paul Klein. Members of the Council expressed their concern at the continuing deterioration of the security situation and the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Liberia. Council members emphasized that all parties to the conflict must honour the ceasefire and commit themselves to finalizing a comprehensive peace agreement as soon as possible.

Members of the Council reiterated that President Taylor must honour his commitment to leave Liberia so that a transitional government could be installed and peace restored. Members of the Council also urged Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) to immediately stop their indiscriminate shelling of Monrovia.

Members of the Council welcomed the imminent deployment of an ECOWAS vanguard force to Liberia, including two Nigerian battalions, and called on the international community to support the ECOWAS efforts.

On 30 July the United States introduced a draft resolution to authorize the establishment of a multinational force in Liberia followed by a United Nations stabilization force to support the transitional government and to assist in the implementation of a comprehensive peace agreement.

Security Council mission to West Africa/follow-up to the reports of the missions to Central Africa and West Africa

On 9 July the report of the Security Council mission to West Africa (S/2003/688) was presented to the Council. On 24 July the Council held informal consultations to consider the follow-up to the reports of the missions of the Council to Central Africa and West Africa, and on 25 July the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2003/12) endorsing the recommendations made in the reports of the missions (S/2003/653 and S/2003/688) which fell within its area of responsibility. The Council invited the Secretary-General to follow up those recommendations which lie within his responsibility, and requested a report on the progress made by 30 November 2003. The Council intends to review progress in implementing the recommendations in December 2003.

Somalia

During informal consultations on 16 July the Secretariat introduced the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia (S/2003/636) and briefed the Council on the latest developments in the region since the report went to print on 10 June. Members of the Council were satisfied to learn that Somali leaders signed a memorandum on 5 July that tries to put an end to the discussions on the Transitional National Charter. Members welcomed the agreement, which should contribute to completing the second phase of the National Reconciliation Conference. They agreed that the Council should show its support at this crucial stage. Members also showed serious concern about the security situation and the violations of the Eldoret Declaration, as well as the humanitarian situation. The President issued a statement to the press after the meeting.

Eritrea and Ethiopia

During informal consultations on 16 July, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations introduced the report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/2003/665), and briefed the Council on the latest developments in the area. Members of the Council expressed satisfaction that the security situation remained calm, but showed their concern at the lack of progress in the demarcation process. They urged the parties to cooperate fully with the Boundary Commission. Members also regretted the absence of political contacts between the parties, and called on them to normalize their relationship through political dialogue, which is crucial for the success of the peace process. Finally, members showed their concern about the humanitarian situation, and the serious shortfall of resources received in response to the consolidated appeals. The Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2003/10) at a subsequent public meeting.

Sudan

The Secretary-General briefed members of the Security Council on the state of the peace process in the Sudan and the efforts of IGAD. He mentioned that the Council could be asked to play a role in due course, should the peace process conclude successfully, in case a future United Nations presence were to be needed in the Sudan.

Asia

Myanmar

On 15 July, one delegation briefed the Security Council, under "Other matters", about the meeting of the Consultative Group for Myanmar with the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Razali Ismail.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

On 14 July the President informed the Security Council of his meeting with the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Ambassador Pak had said that the position of his Government was expressed in the letter of 26 June from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (S/2003/673). The representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea recommended that negotiations restart between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Iraq

The Security Council held a public meeting on 3 July to adopt resolution 1490 (2003). The resolution reaffirms the commitment of all Member States to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq and Kuwait. Moreover it recognizes that the continued operation of UNIKOM in the demilitarized zone established under resolution 687 (1991) is no longer necessary to protect against threats to international security posed by Iraqi actions against Kuwait; the Council therefore decided to end the above-mentioned demilitarized zone, as well as the mandate of UNIKOM, on 6 October 2003.

The Council held an open meeting on 22 July to examine the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 24 of resolution 1483 (2003), in which the Council had requested the Secretary-General to report at regular intervals on the work of the Special Representative in Iraq, Sergio Vieira de Mello, with respect to the implementation of that resolution.

The open meeting was presided by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Spain. The Secretary-General addressed the Council, as did his Special Representative. In his first address to the Council, the Special Representative complemented the report of the Secretary-General, describing the political process under way in Iraq since his arrival in June, with special emphasis on the establishment, on 13 July, of the Governing Council of Iraq, and matters related to security, law and order, humanitarian assistance, the oil-for-food programme, reconstruction, human rights, and access to information. In conclusion, the Special Representative stated that the United Nations and the international community could help the Iraqi process.

At the same meeting, the head of the delegation of the Governing Council of Iraq, Adnan Pachachi, made a statement.

All members of the Security Council made statements in the course of the meeting.

Middle East

Israel-Palestine

The Security Council continued to consider the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. On 17 July, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Terje Roed-Larsen, briefed the Council about the situation in the region, prospects for the peace process and the implementation of the performance-based road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict presented by the Quartet; he expressed some optimism after the latest developments in the region. Most delegations echoed this optimism during the ensuing consultations.

Lebanon

On 31 July, the Security Council adopted, after an amendment was introduced to operative paragraph 4, resolution 1496 (2003), extending the mandate of UNIFIL for a new period of six months in response to the report of the Secretary-General. The Council reiterated the need for self-restraint on the part of the parties in conflict in order to avoid an escalation of tension.

Europe

Cyprus

On 24 July the President briefed members of the Security Council on the concern expressed by the Government of Cyprus about the latest developments in the island, especially the situation of Varosha. The Council reiterated its position on Varosha (resolution 550 (1984)) and urged the parties to resume a negotiation aimed at reaching a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus question on the basis of the Secretary-General's plan, as stated in resolution 1475 (2003).

Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro

On 3 July, during a public meeting in which several delegations took part, Council members heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), Michael Steiner, who introduced the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2003/675).

The Council members expressed their profound appreciation and thanks to Mr. Steiner on the occasion of his departure. While recognizing that participation for all had not yet been achieved in Kosovo, they noted the progress made towards the full implementation of resolution 1244 (1999), reiterated their support for the "standards before status" strategy and stressed the need to build a democratic, multi-ethnic and multicultural Kosovo with full respect for the rule of law and human and minority rights.

On 24 July the Secretary-General informed the members of the Council of his intention to appoint Harri Holkeri as his Special Representative and Head of UNMIK.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

On 11 July, the Security Council adopted resolution 1491 (2003) authorizing the continuation for a further planned period of 12 months of the multinational stabilization force. The Council reaffirmed its intention to keep the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina under close review and welcomed the deployment by the European Union of its Police Mission since 1 January 2003.

Abkhazia, Georgia

On 21 and 22 July 2003 senior representatives of the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General met for the second time at Geneva to consider the way ahead in the peace process concerning Abkhazia, Georgia. The meeting was chaired by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

On 30 July the Council held a private meeting on this issue. The representative of Georgia also participated in the discussion. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Heidi Tagliavini, introduced the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2003/751). The overall situation in Abkhazia, Georgia, was described as calm but still precarious. Members of the Council welcomed the constructive engagement of the two sides to continue their work on specific issues: economic cooperation, return of refugees and internally displaced persons, and political and security matters, following the two meetings at Geneva (February and July) and the summit of Presidents Putin and Shevardnadze in March. Nevertheless, it is regrettable that the core political issue — the future status of Abkhazia within the State of Georgia — still has not been addressed. The hostage-taking incident of 5 June 2003 was strongly condemned and both sides were reminded of their responsibility to ensure safety and security for UNOMIG personnel at all times.

On the same day the Council adopted resolution 1494 (2003), by which it renewed the mandate of UNOMIG for a further six months, until 31 January 2004, and endorsed the recommendation of the Secretary-General that a civilian police component of 20 officers be added to UNOMIG, to strengthen its capacity to carry out its mandate and in particular contribute to the creation of conditions conducive to the safe and dignified return of internally displaced persons and refugees.

Combating terrorism

Counter-Terrorism Committee

The Chairman of the Counter-Terrorism Committee (Spain) presented the three-monthly report of the Committee and its programme of work for the period from July to September 2003 at a public meeting on 23 July. By 31 July, all States Members of the United Nations, as well as two non-members, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and UNMIK, had submitted their first reports to the Committee, 147 Member States and the European Union had submitted second reports and 50 Member States their third reports. In the field of promotion of the signature and ratification by Member States of the 12 international conventions and protocols for combating terrorism, the Committee had carried out outstanding work: in 2001 only two Member States were parties to all 12 conventions while by 31 July more than 37 members were parties to the 12 conventions.

On the other hand, the Counter-Terrorism Committee had identified two challenges for the immediate future: first, technical assistance, which should have an increasingly larger role in the work of the Committee. Given the fact that some States, even when willing to comply with the provisions of resolution 1373 (2001), did not have the means to do so, it was up to the Committee to do everything possible so that those States were able to obtain the technical assistance necessary to fulfil their obligations. Both the donors' matrix and the assistance directory were being regularly updated, and the presidency and the Committee's experts remained in touch with States and regional organizations to develop programmes of technical assistance.

The second challenge identified was the strengthening of cooperation with the relevant international organizations for the implementation of resolution 1373 (2001). This process would be reinforced with the holding of a meeting convened by the Organization of American States in Washington on 7 October 2003. The strengthening of cooperation had also taken the form of letters sent to those organizations, a fact that had contributed to improving channels of communication between the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the organizations.

Moreover, there had been initiatives to ensure adequate coordination between the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999). A joint communiqué had been issued and presented to the media regarding the respective mandates, tools and working methods of the two organs. Regular meetings between the experts of both bodies were going to be held with a view to a fluent exchange of information.

Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999): al-Qa'idah, the Taliban and associated individuals and entities

On 29 July the Security Council held a public meeting in which many delegations took part. The Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999), the Permanent Representative of Chile, gave his second oral report, including an assessment of Member State implementation of the measures imposed by the Council. The Chairman of the Monitoring Group was also invited to respond to questions by members.

Ambassador Heraldo Muñoz gave an update on the main actions taken by the Committee in 2003 and the recent activities of the Monitoring Group. He urged States to submit their reports pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1455 (2003) and pointed out that only 64 reports had been received by that time. He also stressed the importance of enhancing the interactions between the Committee and members.

The Council members recognized the progress made in the implementation of resolution 1455 (2003). They welcomed the improved coordination and increased exchange of information between the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) and the Counter-Terrorism Committee.

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The situation in the Middle East

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Identical letters dated 11 August 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I write to you again, regarding yet another provocative cross-border attack by the terrorist organization Hizbullah, which left one Israeli 16 year-old, Haviv Dadon, dead, and four others injured. This incident, the latest in a series of recent terrorist attacks by Hizbullah initiated from Lebanese territory, comes just three days after my previous letter to you (A/57/854-S/2003/800), which reiterated our persistent concerns regarding the intentions and activities of Hizbullah, and its State sponsors.

Yesterday, at around 12.30 p.m. local time, Hizbullah resumed shelling civilian targets in northern Israel, shellings which had continued over the weekend. Numerous shells were fired by the terror organization, three of which landed in the yard of a private home in the city of Shlomi and in other parts of the city, traumatizing local residents. Haviv Dadon was fatally injured by one of the shells as he was walking home, and shortly thereafter died from his injuries.

It is abundantly clear that Hizbullah with the full support and even the blessings of Syria and Iran has decided to further destabilize the region, just as efforts to restart the peace process are under way. As Israel has repeatedly indicated in letters to the Secretary-General, and in meetings with United Nations officials, the persistent refusal of Lebanon, Syria and Iran to meet their obligations under the norms of international law and the provisions of resolutions 425 (1978), 426 (1978), 1310 (2000), 1337 (2001) and 1373 (2001), to prevent cross-border terrorist attacks and ensure effective peace and security throughout Lebanon, risks escalating tensions in the entire region. It should be stressed, as the Secretary-General has noted in previous reports regarding UNIFIL, that this failure stems from a deliberate policy decision not to deploy troops along the Blue Line so as to restore calm and ensure effective control of the area, as required by Security Council resolutions. Such conduct represents a naked challenge to the international community to

confirm the seriousness with which it is pursuing its global counter-terrorist campaign.

The international community must not tolerate Lebanon's continued and open defiance of the Council, a full three years after Israel's withdrawal in full and confirmed compliance with Security Council resolution 425 (1978). The situation is made more dangerous, if not patently absurd, by the fact that Syria, a primary sponsor of Hizbullah and other terrorist organizations, sits as President of the Council. One would have expected that the Council, in the context of its responsibility to maintain international peace and security, would make its voice heard in the face of these ongoing violations by Hizbullah and its sponsoring States. In the perverse reality created by Syria's membership of the Council, the party mainly responsible for violating the relevant Security Council resolutions is the very party charged with ensuring compliance with them.

In light of this situation, and while seeking to avoid any further escalation in the situation, Israel will adopt the necessary measures to protect its citizens in accordance with the right of self-defence. We reiterate our call to the international community to make clear to the primary sponsors and supporters of the terrorist organization Hizbullah — Lebanon, Syria and Iran — the firm expectation that they will comply with their international obligations, like any responsible State, end their support for terrorism and cease the pursuit of an aggressive and rejectionist agenda which endangers the prospects for peace and security for all the peoples of the region.

The present letter is a follow-up to previous letters concerning the dangerous situation in South Lebanon caused by the illegal attacks perpetrated by Hizbullah across the Blue Line.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this letter circulated as a document of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 36 and 160, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Dan **Gillerman**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative